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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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CATALOGING - PREP.



Either dry or brine pack may be used for most vegetables that are to be frozen, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture home economists. Dry pack is generally recommended because preparation for freezing and serving is easier.

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Choose fully ripe gooseberries if you're planning on making a pie. Berries may be a little underripe for jelly making.

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When you pare apples and pears, make parings as thin as possible. The skin of ripe peaches and apricots sometimes adhere tightly. Dip into boiling water for about 45 seconds, then cold water, and you can peel gently using the dull side of the knife.

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Peppers to be used for stuffing—or in any cooked form—are easier to pack (for freezing in containers) if they are pre-cooked. Head space is necessary. If you're freezing the peppers to be used later in salads you need not pre-cook them—nor do you have to allow air space at top of container.

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Buying fresh coconut? Good fresh coconut is heavy for its size.

FAILING LEAVES

Through fallen leaves—an act of nature—the forest has a fertile floor. And so does your back yard. Fallen leaves contain relatively large amounts of valuable elements, particularly calcium and potassium, which were originally a part of the soil. Top layers of the soil are enriched by the decomposition of the leaves. As the leaves decompose they return part of the elements borrowed from the tree and provide for more water-absorbing humus, according to the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

And — do you know why leaves change color? Most people assume that Jack Frost does it. Not so! Many legends concerning why leaves change color have come down through the years but we now know that change in coloring is the result of chemical processes which take place in the tree as the season changes from summer to winter.

In the fall, partly because of changes in the period of daylight, and changes in temperature too, the leaves stop their food-making process; chlorophyll breaks down and the green color disappears, and the yellowish colors become visible and give the leaves their fall splendor.

For a more complete explanation of this phenomenon, write for a copy of "Why Leaves Change Color" (FS-12).

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HOME SEWING -- Not A Lost Art

It may seem so to some, but home sewing is not a lost art. Thousands of women, and men too, are learning sewing skills. They're not only learning the how-to's of the ancient art of sewing but they are learning about fabrics and finishes—how to put it all together and come out with a superior, finished product.

Today, according to the Extension Service, the educational arm of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, there is something called sociopsychological aspects of clothing—how to dress and make clothes work for you. Clothing specialists, under the auspices of the USDA Extension Service, have developed various programs within their own States to foster the movement of home sewing on local levels.

Home sewing programs from the States offer a different approach to clothing education — some of these are described to show the various methods of reaching consumers who are interested in learning more about fabrics, fashions and the basic facts of sewing.

-MINNESOTA-

"Sew Smart" is the name of a weekly television program series developed by the Agricultural Extension Services of Pennsylvania State University and the University of Minnesota. More than 46,000 Minnesota residents and 12,000 from neighboring States learned basic clothing construction techniques and increased their sewing know-how this past year by watching this series. A packet of study materials was offered free with the TV course. The thirteen lessons covered all aspects of fabric and pattern selection as well as alteration and sewing problems.

-GEORGIA-

"The point-of-sale"—that's where the people want educational information, according to the Extension people in Georgia. A program called "Knit-Knack" takes knit sewing techniques to the fabric shop or the department store fabric area and provides take-home educational materials for the homemaker's reference. Over 5,000 women have been contacted with this sewing information. More than 75,000 bulletins were distributed on sewing in one-three month period.

-CONNECTICUT-

A television morning show on sewing and clothing construction emanates out of the University of Connecticut Television Studio. Live for the morning classes, but taped for the evening session, the programs are used by all branch campuses of the University from Waterbury to Torrington. Most of the audience throughout the State is made up of volunteer leaders. Manuscripts are made available in quantity to leaders for follow-up meetings. A plan for the State Clothing Committee to use a closed circuit TV clothing program has been developed for 1973.

-WASHINGTON STATE-

The Yakima County, Washington, approach is somewhat different. An educational specialist on clothing and fabric items works with the stores so that consumers are able to talk to more knowledgeable sales clerks when they purchase something in the fabric department. The specialist explains new fibers and fabrics, pattern selection, differences in woven and spun polyesters and other fabric finishes.

-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA AND D.C.-

Two events, the "Sew Into Spring" fashion show and educational program and the "Sew Into Winter" classes are featured by the Extension Service for the Metropolitan Washington area in cooperation with USDA. A "Sew Menswear" program is even featured in one of the counties. Due to the increased interest in the area of home sewing, additional programs are scheduled for 1973 with emphasis on the educational part of sewing with more knowledge of fabrics and finishes so the homemaker can enjoy the easier-to-sew construction work.

-VERMONT-

University of Vermont Extension Service reports interest in a new, creative angle to their sew-it-yourself work; making bean bags. Not only traditional bean bags but big Bean bag chairs were made to hold even a sturdy youngster. Interest in the new project created material for three television shows which were shown not only in Vermont but New York State.

WINTER IN THE FOREST

If you're planning a winter visit to the National Forests—America's playground for skiers, snowshoers, or other winter sportsmen—consider enjoying the newest sport of them all—snowmobiling. New, that is, to most of us.

For, snowmobiling can open new vistas of sight and sound — forested winter landscapes are fantastic, with changes around every bend, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service.

But, if you're going snowmobiling be a good sportsman. Learn the rules of safety, and common sense before venturing into the forests. Tell relatives or friends about your trip, your planned route of travel and your estimated time of return. Know what the distress signals are: three smokes, three blasts of a whistle, three shouts, three flashes of light, three of anything that will attract attention.

Be a considerate sportsman. Don't litter trails or camping areas. Don't pollute streams or lakes. Don't damage living trees, shrubs, or other natural features.

Remember to offer a helping hand when you see someone in distress. Assist and search for others if called upon, but—respect their rights to enjoy the recreational facilities.

Never harass wildlife—avoid areas posted for the protection of wildlife.

If lost—or if you have mechanical trouble with your snowmobile; keep calm, think, decide on a plan. Trust your compass—backtrack if feasible—if not remain in place. Don't separate if with a party, don't abandon your snowshoes. Build a fire and shelter — stay warm. Mark your base camp.

Snowmobiling can be your most enjoyable winter sport. It will allow you to see untold scenic beauty, and to see wildlife at close range. You may even come across an old sawmill town — long abandoned. Get to know the Snow Rangers and visit their Ranger Station. Get maps and study the terrain before you go — and happy snowmobiling.

COMMENTS & INQUIRIES TO:

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